

The Regent and the Reformers.

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us and our tennantis for feading of thare idill bellyes: thei truble our precheris, and wold murther tharne and us. Shall we suffer this any longare? Na, Madame, it shall nott be. And tharewith everie man putt on his steill bonet." This bold speech intimidated the regent into a sham disavowal of hostility. "Me meanes no evill to you, nor to your preachearis," she protested. " The bischoppes shall do you no wrong. Ye ar all very loving subjectis." " My lords," she added, turning to the bishops, " I forbid you eyther to truble thame or thare preachearis." The Lords of the Congregation followed up this apparent victory by a second Petition and Protestation, demanding reform in more pressing terms, and laying the blame for the civil disorders that must ensue from a refusal on the regent and the prelates. " We protest that yf any tumult or uproare shall aryise amonges the membres of this realme for the diversitie of religioun, and yf it shall chance that abuses be violentlie reformed, that the crime thaireof be not impute to us, who most humlie do now seak all thinges to be reformed by ane ordour: But rather whatsoever inconvenient shall happin to follow for lack of ordour tacken, that may be imputed to those that do refuse the same. And last, we protest, that these our requeastis, proceeding from conscience, do tend to none other end, but to the Reformatioun of abuses in Religioun onlie: most humilie beseiking the sacred Authoritie to tak us, faithful and obedient subjectis, in pro-tection against our adversaries, and to schaw unto us suche indifferencie in our most just Petitionis, as it becumeth God's Lievetenentis to do to those that in his name do call for defense against cruell oppressouris and bloode-thrustie tyrantis."

Under this continued pressure Mary summoned an ecclesiastical council in the spring of 1559 to reform the more flagrant abuses of which the petitioners complained, but its resolutions, laudable enough as far as they went, made no concessions in the matter of doctrine and ceremonial, and failed utterly to stem the revolutionary tide. Had the revolutionary movement been confined to a few malcontent nobles and preachers, these makeshift improvements might have staved off the crash. But behind the nobles and the preachers stood a large section of the people, and the people